

BOYS' LIFE

CONTENTS

Cover photograph by John Zimmerman.

MARCH 1978

Articles

8 THE SEARCH FOR THE PERFECT SWING
When Mike Schmidt finds it, pitchers head for the showers. By Jim Brosnan

20 SIDEWALK SURFING U.S.A.
Concrete waves never break for modern skateboard riders. By Ken Fulton

30 FRISBEE
The plastic pastime for anyone, anywhere, any way. By Kathryn Tidyman

34 JOHN INMAN: GOLFING'S JUNIOR STAR
Even alligators and yellowjackets can't stop John's rise to the top. By Brian Payne

36 THE TOUGHEST TEST IN SPORTS
For Vince Reilly, it's the 10 events of the decathlon. By Marc Bloom

Fiction

40 THE INVADERS
The aliens landed, and they would never leave. By Jack Ritchie

Cartoon Features

58 Pee Wee Harris

60 Pedro Patrol

59 Bible Stories

61 Scouts in Action

The Scouting Trail

44 Program Contents
44 Make a Survival Kit
46 Survival Cooking Can Taste Good
48 Skill Award
49 Scouting Around
50 Green Bar Bill
52 Build a Periscope

54 Build a Compost Bin
56 Why the Ball Doesn't Fall

Special Features

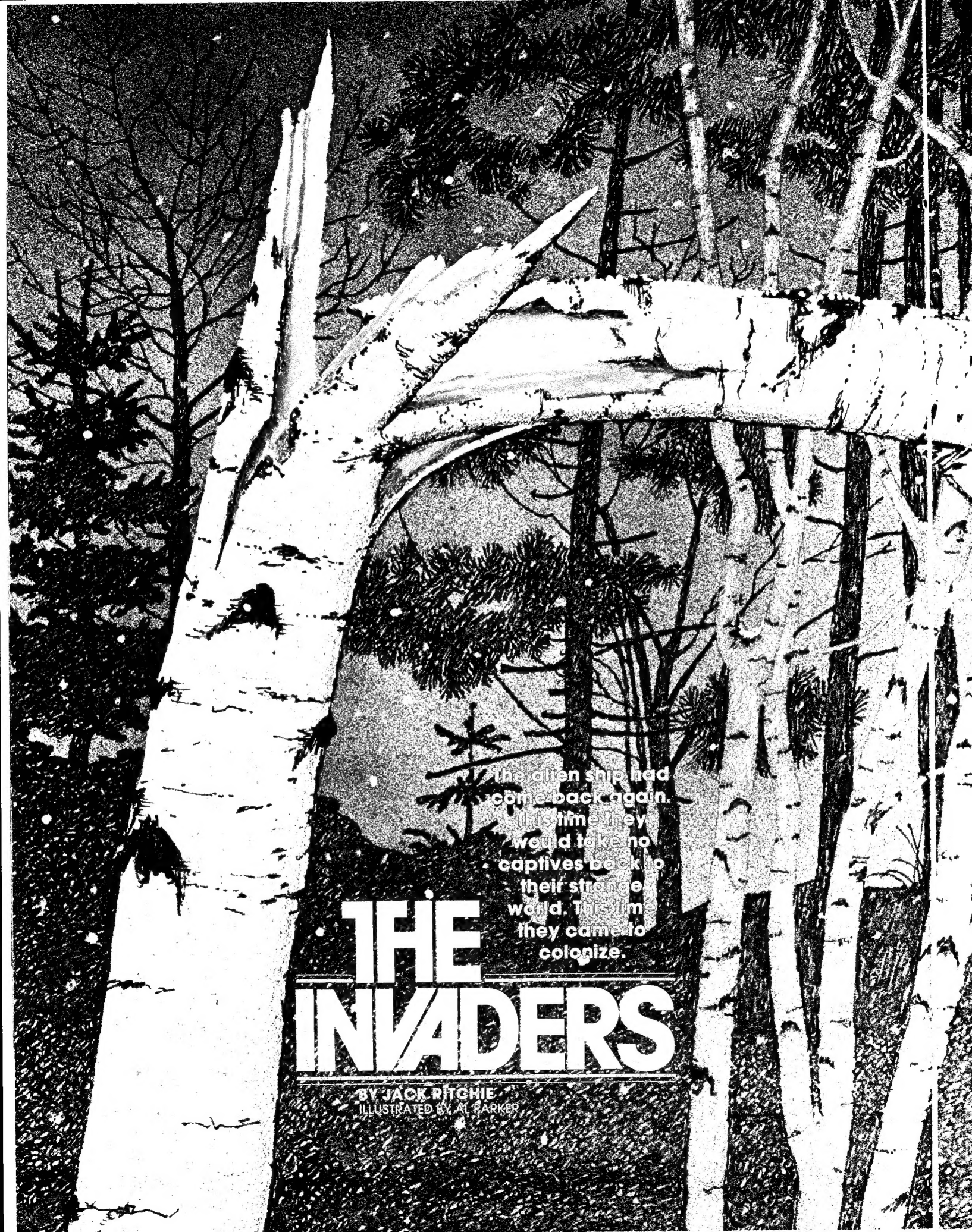
62 Popcorn: The All-American Food
63 Puzzle Corner
66 Make Your Own Greeting Cards
71 Bird Pets
74 Popularity Contest Calculator Game

79 Indoor Gardening

Columns

4 Hitchin' Rack
16 Nature
18 Science
19 About Books
26 Ecology Notes
28 History
29 Safety
64 Hobby Hows
72 Stamps & Coins
80 Think & Grin

BOYS' LIFE is published monthly by the Boy Scouts of America, North Brunswick, N.J. 08902. 70 cents a copy, \$7.20 a year. Outside the United States, add \$1.75 per year for postage. Special rates, to members of the Boy Scouts of America, through local council offices. Second-class postage paid at New Brunswick, N.J. and at additional mailing offices (PM 132-25 section g). Accepted for special postage provided for in T103, Act of October, 1917, June 13, 1938, November, 1958. Volume LXVIII, No. 3 © 1978 by the Boy Scouts of America. All rights thereunder reserved; anything appearing in Boys' Life may not be reprinted either wholly or in part without permission. Send stamped, self-addressed envelopes with unsolicited manuscripts, photos, illustrations. Boys' Life will not be responsible for manuscripts, photos, and illustrations in its office or in transit. Postmaster: Send form 3579 to Boys' Life, New Brunswick, N.J. 08903.



The alien ship had
come back again.
This time they
would take no
captives back to
their strange
world. This time
they came to
colonize.

THE INVADERS

BY JACK RITCHIE
ILLUSTRATED BY AL PARKER

None of them left the ship on the first day of its arrival, but I knew that they would be watching carefully for signs of human life.

The skies were dark with scudding clouds, and the cold wind moved high in the trees. Thin snow drifted slowly to the ground.

From the cover of the forest, I now watched as a small, heavily armed group of them left the large craft. When they reached the edge of the woods, they hesitated for a few moments and then moved cautiously forward.

I had seen them before and I knew that in appearance, at least, they were not monsters. They looked very much like us. There were some differences, of course, but all in all, we were really quite similar.

I met them first when I was almost a boy and I had been without caution. I approached them and they seemed friendly, but then suddenly they seized me and carried me off in their strange ship.

It was a long journey to their land and when our ship made a landing, I was shown about and exhibited as though I were some kind of animal.

I saw their cities, and I was shown plants and animals completely strange to me. I learned to wear their clothing and even to eat their food.

They taught me to communicate in their strange and difficult tongue until I could, at times, even think in their language.

I had almost given up the hope of ever seeing my home again, but they one day put me back on one of their ships and told me that they were returning me because they wished to establish friendly relations with my people. But by now, I knew enough of them to know that this was not true. However, I nodded and smiled and watched for my opportunity to escape.

When the ship landed, I went out

with the first search party. It was near evening and as the darkness gathered, I edged away from them and finally I fled into the blackness and safety of the forest.

They came after me, of course, but I was hidden deep in the woods where they could not find me.

Finally they gave up and I watched their ship become smaller and finally disappear, and I hoped fervently that they would never return.

But now they were back again.

I felt a coldness inside of me as I watched them moving slowly through the trees. They seemed somehow different from the others who had been here before. It was not so much in their appearance as in the air about them—the way they walked, the way they looked about with speculating eyes.

Slowly and instinctively, I realized that this time they were not here on just another raid for a captive or two.

This time they had come to stay.

What could we do now? Could we lure them deeper into the forest and kill them? Could we take their weapons and learn how to use them?

No, I thought despairingly. There were so many more of the invaders on the ship. And more weapons. They would come out and hunt us down like animals. They would hunt us down and kill us all.

I sighed. We must find out what it was that they wanted this time and whatever it might be, we must learn to adjust and to hope for the best.

But I still retreated silently before them, afraid to approach. I watched them search the ground ahead of them and knew they were looking for footprints, for some signs of life. But there was not yet enough snow on the ground to track us down.

Their strangely colored eyes glanced about warily. They were cautious, yes.

They could be a cruel race, I knew.

I had seen with my own eyes how they treated their animals and even their own kind.

I sighed again. Yes, and we could be cruel, too. In this respect we could not claim to be superior to the invaders.

But perhaps this was all for the best. In many respects, theirs was by far the superior civilization. Could they teach us to live in peace? Could they end our wars, our slaughters?

They paused now in a clearing, their eyes gleaming beneath their helmets.

It was time for me to approach them.

I took a deep breath and stepped into the open.

Their weapons quickly pointed at me.

"Welcome," I said.

They stared at me, and then one of them turned to their bearded leader. "It appears that this savage can speak some English, Captain Standish."

"Welcome," I said again. But I wondered what they would do to my land and my people now. ♣

**Theirs
was a
cruel
race,
but so
was
ours.**